

Faculty Senate Minutes

February 15, 2019

Senators Present: Babb, Bartlett, Burnett, Clewett, Clifton, Davis, Franken, Garcia, Ingrassia, Karaganis, King, Kwan, Leitch, Li, Macdonald, Meljac, Revett, Rollin, Seth, Seward, Williams and Woodyard.

Senators Absent: Castillo, Curl, Lewis, and Wang

Substitutes: Ashley Pinkham for Yvette Castillo

Call to Order: Davis called the meeting to order at 12:24 pm in the Eternal Flame Room of the JBK.

Guest Speaker: Dr. Shaffer, Provost

Dr. Shaffer spoke on two primary topics – Faculty Handbook Changes and Open Educational Resources (OER)

Faculty Handbook Changes

The university rules Faculty Eligibility for Merit Pay Increases are in Section 5 of the Faculty Handbook (page 43). Paragraphs 5.1.2.1 and 5.1.2.3 contradict each other on merit increase eligibility. Paragraph 5.1.2.1 sets eligibility at an Overall Evaluation Rating of 2.5 satisfactory/excellent or higher. Paragraph 5.1.2.3 makes faculty ineligible for merit pay if their evaluation rating is less than 2.5 in Instructional Responsibilities, Intellectual Contributions or Professional Service or if the faculty member has not produced a peer-reviewed publication or off campus creative activity within the three previous evaluation periods.

Deans want to eliminate Paragraph 5.1.2.3 and make the overall rating of 2.5 in Paragraph 5.1.2.1 the only requirement. This change would enhance consistency and reduce confusion.

The proposed change about faculty attendance at graduation and convocation was rejected by the Dean's. The Dean's felt that five hours of time per year was not too much to ask. Dr. Shaffer said that no one from his office is formally keeping track of non-attendance but that the Dean's probably knew. Faculty senators mentioned problems with childcare, hearing during the ceremony and student interest in convocation.

Dr. Shaffer agreed that student interest had declined since the speaker was no longer the author of the book. The current plan is to go back to the book author as the speaker. Several faculty members suggested surveying the students about convocation and telling the students the reason behind convocation (see how graduation works). Dr. Shaffer also mentioned a new sound system for graduations/convocation should allow faculty to hear stage speakers.

OER

First, Dr. Shaffer stated that there was no mandatory movement to do away with textbooks; there is no fiat from the Provost. Second, Dr. Shaffer said the purpose behind looking at OER is to lower the cost of textbooks for students in core curriculum courses, and get rid of textbooks that students are buying but not using in the course. Faculty should look at their course materials and determine if OER could be used without lowering the quality of the course. Faculty are still in charge of their classes. Dr. Shaffer asked for faculty senator comments.

Some faculty are encountering problems with mixed messages from different administrators. One administrator explains OER as a faculty decision while another administrator explains OER as a mandate. Since we are in the middle of performance review season, not listening to the administrator that evaluates you is stressful. Dr. Shaffer asked for details for specific faculty members.

The remaining discussion was similar to the points brought up at the February 1, 2019 Faculty Senate meeting with Elise Tolley, Student Body President. Dr. Shaffer addressed the perception that lowering textbook costs would make a major dent in student costs. He said that textbook costs are a “low-hanging fruit” and seen as the easiest to fix. Many of the other education costs would require structural changes.

The Student Academic Liaison Committee provided Dr. Shaffer with thoughts from their meeting with the students. Some of the main points from that meeting are:

- The student representatives wanted textbooks for certain courses (i.e., math and science).
- The student representatives were very open and excited to meet with faculty.
- The student representatives liked the idea of book repositories.
- The student representatives also liked the idea of seeing book information at registration.

Faculty senator comments over the last two meetings parallel these points.

In his final statements, Dr. Shaffer addressed the timing of merit increases. He had no answer for anything happening this school year but everything looks good for a merit increase next school year.

Dr. Shaffer finished by stressing that OER is about lowering course costs without lowering course quality.

Approval of Minutes: King made a motion to approve the Faculty Senate minutes of February 1, 2019; Ingrassia seconded.

Current and Pending (Old) Business

Instructor Promotion Committee

Committee are working on a revised proposal after last proposal rejected by Dean's.

Merit Increase Committee

Previously the Committee asked senators to contact peers at similar institutions and ask them several questions concerning merit raise increases. Babb contacted several peers and found that they knew very little about the process of granting increases. On the whole, the peer institution's processes were as nebulous as ours.

Student Academic Liaison Committee

On February 13, 2019, this committee met with the Student Senate Academic Affairs Committee. The Faculty Senate committee reported the students were very enthusiastic about meeting with faculty. They were surprised about the gap between faculty and administration and now understood the importance in meeting with both bodies. Some of the key points from the meeting are in the third paragraph from the top of this page.

Other items discussed were having the two committees meet on a regular basis and entire faculty meeting with entire student body once per semester as well. The student body president would also come to Faculty Senate as a regular guest speaker.

Babb proposed the current committee become a standing committee called the Student Body Liaison Committee; King seconded. The motion passed unanimously. All current members are willing to continue serving – Babb, Clewett, Clifton, Kwan, Meljac, and Seward.

Faculty Development Leave

Faculty Senate received applications for one semester's leave from Dave Rausch and Keith Price. There is enough funding for both applications. Senators voted to forward both applications to the Provost with one abstention for Dave Rausch, two abstentions for Keith Price but no opposition for either.

New Business

A January 30, 2019 press release gave 12th class-day enrollment numbers of 9,188 in Spring 2018 and 9,255 in Spring 2019, an increase of sixty-seven students. The 12th class-day enrollment numbers provided to colleges showed a Spring 2018 to 2019 decrease of 9,378 to 9,305. This decrease was the cited reason for no one-time bonuses (Note: one-time bonuses were discussed late fall 2018 due to the lack of merit raises.)

King made a motion that the Faculty Senate reach out to Jarvis and:

- a) Verify the official reporting date for academic reporting and
- b) Ask for the official academic reporting numbers for the last six (6) long semesters.

The motion was seconded by Babb and passed unanimously.

Upcoming Schedule

March 1

March 22

April 5

April 26 – President Walter Wendler

The Faculty Senate meeting adjourned 1:37 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Burnett, Secretary

Minutes approved at March 22, 2019 Faculty Senate Meeting